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November 10, 1999

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, NW Room 6151
Washington, DC 20240

SUBJECT: Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration EIS/EIR

Dear Secretary Babbitt:

The Northern California Power Agency¹ has recently received a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIS/EIR) analyzing and making recommendations of actions to "restore and maintain the natural production of anadromous fish on the Trinity River mainstem downstream of Lewiston Dam." The scope of the DEIS/EIR and the magnitude of the adverse impacts resulting from execution of the "preferred alternative" necessitate a very comprehensive and careful review of the data and analysis. NCPA, therefore, requests a 90-day extension in the public comment period to allow for proper consideration of the facts and alternatives for action.

The Central Valley Project (CVP) water and power customers have for many years been supportive of efforts to resolve Trinity River Basin environmental issues - particularly those related to the health of the Trinity River fishery and the Basin as a whole. At the same time, our groups have demonstrated our commitment to achieving the environmental and water resource improvement objectives of the San Francisco Bay-San Joaquin Delta, like the CVP Improvement Act (CVPIA) and CALFED implementation programs.

It is our intention to prepare a detailed constructive comment on the DEIS/EIR and to work with you and the responsible state and federal agencies to achieve these goals. In addition to our request for a 90-day extension of the public comment period, we ask that you consider holding

¹ NCPA is a nonprofit California joint powers agency established in 1968 to generate, transmit, and distribute electric power to and on behalf of its fourteen members: cities of Alameda, Biggs, Gridley, Healdsburg, Lodi, Lompoc, Palo Alto, Redding, Roseville, Santa Clara, Ukiah, the Port of Oakland, the Truckee Donner Public Utility District, and the Turlock Irrigation District; and nine associate members: cities of Davis, Santa Barbara, Watsonville, West Sacramento, APAG Power, Bay Area Rapid Transit District, Lassen Municipal Utility District, Placer County Water Agency, and the Plumas-Sierra Electric Cooperative serving nearly 700,000 electric consumers in central and northern California.

informational workshops to explain to the larger public constituency the scientific basis for the preferred alternative and to engage in discussion of potential impacts. The three already scheduled hearings on the DEIS/EIR could be converted to such workshops - and the formal hearings rescheduled for February 2000.

Actions to improve the Trinity River fishery cannot occur in a vacuum. Accomplishing Trinity River environmental restoration goals in a reasonable, prudent and feasible manner that minimizes adverse impacts and allows for concurrent resolution of Bay-Delta objectives will require additional data analysis and synthesis of alternatives not covered by the DEIS/EIR.

Thank you for considering our request. Please contact Mr. Roger Fontes, Legislative & Regulatory business unit manager, at (916) 781-4203 if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,


GEORGE FRASER
General Manager

RAJ RF/cap
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cc: Vice President Al Gore
Hon. Dianne Feinstein
Hon. Cal Dooley
Hon. Wally Herger
Hon. Doug Ose
Hon. George Radanovich
Hon. David Hayes
Mr. Lester Snow
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Governor Gray Davis
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